

**Knapp
Environmental
Construction
Services,
Inc.**

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7/14/99
#106211

July 14th, 1999

Attn: Mr. Steven Faryan
On Scene Coordinator,
Emergency Response Branch
c/o: U.S.E.P.A
77 West Jackson Boulevard,
H5E-5J
Chicago, Illinois 60604-3590

Re: Contractor Qualification
Conservation Chemical Site
Gary, Indiana

Dear Mr. Faryan,

During my recent discussions with Mr. David Pyles of Krikau, Pyles & Rysiewicz (KPR), regarding the Conservation Chemical site, Mr. Pyles indicated that you had initially questioned the use of Knapp Environmental Construction Services Inc. (KECS) on the Conservation Chemical project as USEPA had "...a bad experience.." with KECS at the Uniroyal site in Mishawaka, Indiana. Mr. Pyles mentioned that the problems were something related to improper disposal of hazardous wastes, a clean up that was performed improperly, and something regarding building demolition. As KECS and KPR have successfully completed many projects in the past, and have had nothing but positive feedback from our clients, Mr. Pyles and KPR were very concerned regarding these comments, as I am, and recommended that we write to you to discuss these issues.

Over the past week, I have reviewed all of our files where USEPA may have been involved in project oversight or where hazardous waste issues would apply. Mr. Pyles also mentioned that you were not directly involved with the Uniroyal project, but that someone from your department had mentioned "...a Mishawaka company..". Thus, I also reviewed any past Bids for the Uniroyal site. Based upon my discussion with Mr. Pyles and our review, I believe that you may have KECS confused with Safety & Environmental Resources (SER), also of Mishawaka, and I would like to correct this misunderstanding.

First, in regards to a clean up that was “..performed improperly..”, I am only aware of two “..clean ups..” that have been completed at the Uniroyal site within the past three years. The most recent was a clean up of various areas around the site, including the raceway underneath the facility, which I believe was coordinated by Mr. Ken Thiesen of the USEPA. Several years ago, we were asked to prepare limited scope cost estimates for cleaning of the race, but to my knowledge nothing was completed until USEPA and Mr. Thiesen undertook the project this year. If Mr. Thiesen was involved with the Uniroyal site clean up and if Mr. Thiesen is in your department, then it may be Mr. Thiesen that has confused KECS confused with SER, both of Mishawaka. This is the only link that I can find between Uniroyal, USEPA, and someone from your department.

Second, the only other clean up I am aware of at Uniroyal was the removal of wastes from numerous pits located within the facility and disposal of various leftover drums of materials left at the site about two years ago. We were originally invited by Uniroyal to prepare a Bid for the cleaning of the pits and other issues at the site. During the pre-construction meeting we were informed that the wastes could be considered hazardous and that certain RCRA issues may be applicable. Our Bid included placing the pit residues into drums for disposal “..by the owner..”, which is our standard company policy to avoid potential long term liability issues associated with the transportation or disposal of hazardous wastes. However, the Bid was awarded to SER by the bankruptcy trustee, Ms. Lynn Miller of Miller & Miller, who represents the former Uniroyal company. I believe that these activities were completed by SER in 1997 through 1998.

Being in a small town and in a common industry, we have heard unconfirmed rumors that wastes from the SER clean up were “..disposed of improperly..”, however, we have no direct knowledge of what, if any, improper activities occurred. We have also been told that SER will never work for the City of Mishawaka again, due to their involvement with the Uniroyal project and other concerns raised by the USEPA. Based upon these comments, we assume that the clean up completed by SER was performed immediately prior to Mr. Thiesen’s arrival at the site and that Mr. Thiesen may have reviewed SER’s recent clean up activities before completing other activities at the site. Thus, with both companies being from a small town like Mishawaka, we can conclude that Mr. Thiesen may be associating KECS with SER. Again, as we were not involved with this project after the bidding stage, we have no direct knowledge of what may have happened regarding waste disposal at the Uniroyal site.

Third, in regards to “..demolition..”, the only demolition project we have undertaken which can be associated with the Uniroyal site, is the demolition of an abandoned warehouse for the City of Mishawaka in November of last year. The building was located on the east side of Main Street, away from the Uniroyal site

where other clean up activities occurred. The building was constructed in the late 1800's and was formerly used only as a dry goods warehouse by Uniroyal. Environmental assessment of the property and removal of asbestos materials had been completed by the City of Mishawaka prior to demolition of the building and we have these documents in our files. The building was recycled by our company and the only materials that were transported off site were concrete and asphalt pavement, which was taken to a local recycling firm.

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It is our understanding that the other Uniroyal buildings will be demolished early next year and that there are numerous environmental issues associated with demolition of the Uniroyal site to the east. However, if the USEPA is aware of any environmental issues associated with this demolition project, please contact our office and/or Mr. Jeff Rea with the City of Mishawaka to discuss these issues.

As I stated earlier, I believe that USEPA may have Knapp Environmental Construction Services Inc. of Mishawaka confused with Safety & Environmental Resources of Mishawaka, regarding past activities completed by SER at the former Uniroyal site. My employees and I take pride in being considered one of the best environmental construction contractors in the region and we have had only positive feedback from our clients, state and local officials regarding our company. If there are any other issues concerning our company that I am not aware of, if there are any comments you may have on how we can improve our services, or if your concerns are related to some other project, please give me a call to discuss these issues. As a contractor, I am very aware of the importance of maintaining a good reputation in this industry, and I am very concerned that USEPA believes that KECS has done something improper.

As KECS has been requested by Krikau, Pyles & Rysiewicz, to Bid on completing certain tasks at the Conservation Chemical site, I would like to resolve any issues that USEPA may have with KECS as soon as possible. If you should have some time available, even at the Conservation Chemical site, I would appreciate discussing any areas of concern you may have at your earliest convenience. Thank You.

Sincerely,



Doug Knapp, President

encls: No
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Phone: (312) 353-9351
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cc: Mr. David Pyles, KPR